

For the Aging Network:
Questions and Answers
About the SeniorCare Extension

Q: When may beneficiaries expect to receive temporary cards?

A: According to the Department of Public Aid, temporary cards will be mailed before the end of July.

Q: Will beneficiaries be reimbursed for out-of-pocket costs of prescriptions before a temporary card is received?

A: This is unclear. Pharmacies are not required to make refunds. However, beneficiaries may ask for refunds. For help in working with pharmacists, call the Health Benefits Hotline, 1-800-226-0768.

Q: Are there any additional problems that we should be aware of?

A: Beneficiaries may still encounter problems at the pharmacy with the expired white card. The pharmacist must get the beneficiary's Recipient Identification Number (RIN) that has replaced the Social Security number as an identifier. A pharmacy can get an RIN by submitting an eligibility transaction through the electronic claims processing system. Another option: the pharmacist can call the health benefits Provider Hotline, 1-800-842-1461. First enter the pharmacy's Medicaid provider number; then press "0" to speak to a representative. After the pharmacist gives the patient's name and Social Security number, the hotline representative will give the RIN.

Q: What is being done about the HIPAA privacy law? My agency could not aid clients in reapplication to SeniorCare because we did not know about a privacy form.

A: General Counsel Gale S. Thetford of the Department on Aging says "I am making this my highest priority."

She said she is communicating with the Departments of Public Aid and Revenue in what she describes as "an effort to better enable our network to access information for seniors regarding these programs and still be in compliance with HIPAA. We are working on interagency agreements regarding data-sharing that incorporate necessary

(Continued on back page)

HIPAA language and working to develop similar language in grants and contracts.”

She said she will ask the Area Agencies to submit a list of the authorized individuals at both the Area Agencies and the local provider agencies that she will forward to the Revenue and Public Aid staff who handle these respective programs.

“Once completed, these authorized staff will no longer have to complete individual authorizations for clients to access information regarding these two programs,” she said.

Q: Does the Pharmaceutical Assistance Program also have an extension for renewal?

A: No.